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Viewing cable 10CARACAS241, Jesus Christ, Super Censored": GBRV Pressure Sinks

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. #**10CARACAS241**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
10CARACAS241	2010-02-26 20:59	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Caracas

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.elnuevoherald.com/2011/08/08/998979/documentan-ofensiva-de-chavez.html>

VZCZCXRO4676
OO RUEHAG RUEHAO RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHCV #0241 0572100
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 262059Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0535
INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFSS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 000241

SIPDIS
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL LEIPZIG
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PASS TO AMCONSUL RECIFE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PASS TO AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PASS TO AMEMBASSY GRENADA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/02/26
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [VE](#) [PHUM](#) [SCUL](#) [EINV](#)
SUBJECT: "Jesus Christ, Super Censored": GBRV Pressure Sinks
Musical's Sponsorship Deal

CLASSIFIED BY: Rolf Olson, Acting Political Counselor, DOS, POL;
REASON: 1.4(D)

¶1. (C) Summary: On February 26, local media reported that a sponsorship deal for the Venezuelan musical production of Jesus Christ, Superstar fell apart after the production company refused to comply with demands by sponsors Blackberry-RIM and Movilnet that publicity for the musical not be placed in certain local media considered unfriendly to the Venezuelan government (GBRV), such as TV station Globovision and newspapers El Nacional and El Universal. Production company director Michel Hausmann said that the state-owned Movilnet and Canadian-based Blackberry-RIM further informed him that the producers could place no ads - even with their own money - in media which had not been approved by the two companies. Hausmann and his fellow producers refused to comply, and are seeking other financing. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Local media on February 26 reported that local production company Palo de Agua had pulled out of a \$300,000 agreement with two companies, Blackberry-RIM and Movilnet, to sponsor and provide publicity for an upcoming local production of the musical Jesus Christ, Superstar. (Note: Movilnet is the cell phone subsidiary of GBRV-owned telephone company CANTV; Blackberry-RIM is a private Canadian company. End Note.) According to Palo de Agua's director, Michel Hausmann, the deal had initially been consummated verbally on January 7, followed by a January 21 written confirmation from the two companies.

¶3. (SBU) Hausmann relayed that on January 29, Palo de Agua's leadership was summoned to a meeting in the Caracas offices of Movilnet, where the producers were informed of a "new condition" for the contract. Palo de Agua would be barred from placing ads for the musical in a handful of specified local media outlets: Globovision, radio station Ateneo FM, and local newspapers El Nacional, El Universal, El Nuevo Pais, Tal Cual, and Revista Zeta. Furthermore, Palo de Agua could not purchase advertising - even with its own resources - in media which had not been approved by Blackberry RIM and Movilnet. According to Hausmann, an official of Movilnet asserted that the musical could only be advertised in the newspaper Ultimas Noticias and television channels other than Globovision. Finally, the banned media outlets could also not serve as co-sponsors of the musical, despite having done so for previous Palo de Agua productions.

¶4. (C) Hausmann told Cultural Officer by phone on February 26 that Palo de Agua appealed directly to the Mexico-based regional headquarters for Blackberry-RIM, which refused to back away from Movilnet's demand, arguing it could not go against its "biggest ally in the region." Hausmann said Palo de Agua then formally pulled out of the deal by affirming that it was "an autonomous business that did not mix its artistic objectives with ideologies that run contrary to principles of liberty and democracy." Fellow Palo de Agua director Yair Rosemberg observed that "it's one thing when the government acts this way, to which we are well-accustomed. But Blackberry-RIM is a business that has many interests outside of Venezuela." Hausmann also relayed to Cultural Officer that Palo de Agua had wanted to go public about the dispute when it transpired in late January, but feared retaliation before the production work had commenced. Hausmann said his fears were confirmed when in the first hour after the news broke on February 26, Palo de Agua's agent received a call from Movilnet asserting that Palo de Agua "would regret the decision" to go public, and should be prepared to "get screwed."

¶5. (C) Comment: The GBRV's policy of withdrawing advertising from private media outlets it perceives to be "attacking the revolution" has already taken a significant toll on the financial prospects of many of those outlets (Reftel). This incident confirms the degree to which the GBRV seeks to shut off any source of revenue to media it considers politically antagonistic. End Comment.

DUDDY